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# What is Motivating Residential Green Power Purchasers?

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### Overview

- Inklings of an idea
  - California
  - NREL
- Possible theories of motivation and change
- Recent studies
  - Wisconsin
  - TVA
  - National study
- Changing marketing message for Green Power
- Acknowledgements



### California, 1998

- > EPA Landfill Gas Focus Groups
  - Held at Sacramento Municipal Utility District
  - SMUD has Greenergy<sup>sm</sup> Program
- Greenergy<sup>sm</sup> Customers
  - "If I don't do it, who will?"
  - "It seems important to take the first step"
- Other Customers
  - "Why should I do it if everyone else isn't."
  - "I think it should be the same for everyone.



## **Participation is Behind WTP**

- Barbara Farhar (1999) at NREL documented high willingness to pay for renewable energy.
  - An average of 70% of customers willing to pay \$5 per month additional for renewable power, across 12 different utility studies.
- In 2000 NREL reported green power programs rarely exceed 2% participation.
  - SMUD 1.4%, MG&E >4%.
- ➤ In 2002, Renewable NW found some local utility programs >3-4%



#### Some Theories To Consider

- Theory of Planned Behavior (Azjen, 1988)
  - Attitudes have linkage to behavior though perceived behavioral control and intentions.
- Self Efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and Response Efficacy (Bandura, 1997)
  - Self Efficacy
    - The individual's perception of their own control over performing a behavior effectively.
  - Response Efficacy
    - The perception that the behavior will have predictable and desirable outcomes.



## Wisconsin Focus on Energy

- Evaluation of WI Focus on Energy Program.
- Specific effort to track effects of renewable energy advertising
  - Awareness of renewable energy increased from 46% Nov 1999 to 52% May 2000.
  - Awareness of campaign advertisements increased from 17% to 28%.
  - Changes in self-efficacy beliefs correlated with consumer response to ads.



#### More Wisconsin

- High self-efficacy seems most likely explanation for:
  - Ad recall
  - Increased awareness of ads
  - Increased motivation to seek information from advertisers and contractors
  - Motivating respondents to think about how to apply the information



#### TVA Research

- One year after Green Power Switchsm began:
  - Participation rate was a bit lower than expected, but
  - Purchased residential blocks exceeded expectations with the average purchase at 1.7 blocks
  - Purchased commercial blocks exceed expectations at over 5,000 blocks.

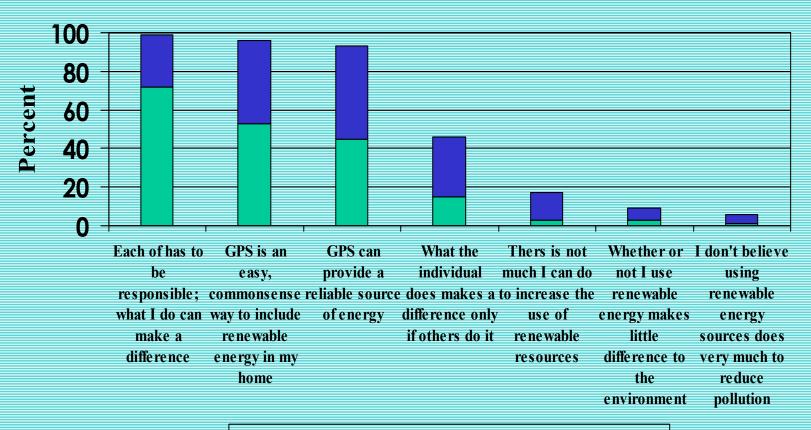


#### More TVA Research

- Survey conducted spring 2001
- Respondents very enthusiastic
- Self-efficacy responses higher than product innovativeness
- Other findings
  - 60% member church or religious group
  - 46% member environmental group
  - 54% knew some or a lot about green power prior to hearing about the program



## Self-Efficacy Was High

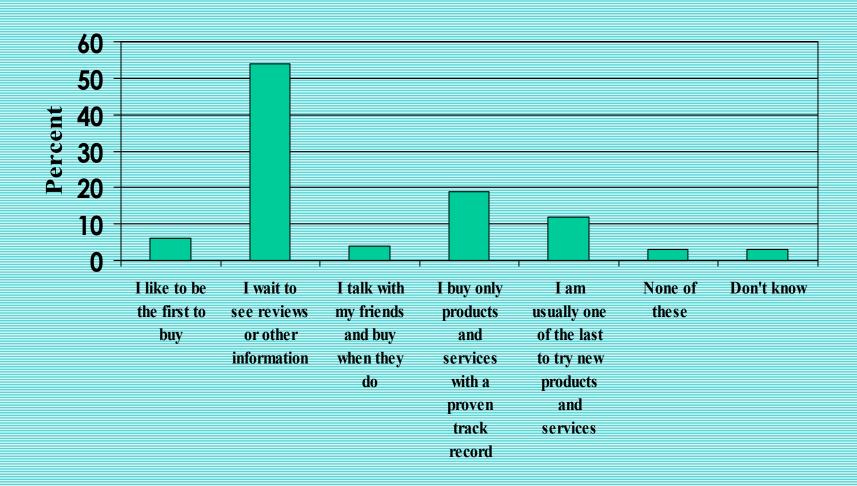


■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree



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### Not Innovators





## What Really is Self-Efficacy?

- > A personal judgment of confidence.
  - Tends to be task specific and contextsensitive.
  - Made and used in reference to some type of goal.
  - Can I do this?
- > Self-concept is a judgment of self-worth.
  - Not task or context specific.
  - Who am I? How do I feel about?



## National Green Power Study

- Over 1,100 respondents; nearly 700 participants in a utility green power program.
- Self-efficacy questions were used, but problems in data collection resulted in incomplete results.
  - The trend, though not significant, showed:
    - Perceptions that it is important to make a purchase of green power (high self-efficacy) led to higher probability of participation.
    - While perception of others needing to make these purchases first (low self-efficacy) led to lower probability of participation.



## Participation Model Results

- Analysis shows that probability to participate was higher for those who:
  - Make donations to public TV or to environmental causes.
  - Recycle, eat organic foods, purchase goods from environmentally friendly companies, or have advanced college degrees.
- The probability of participation is lower for those who:
  - Volunteer at schools, or hunt.



## Implications of Research

- Some predictors may just reflect the sources of lists.
  - Public TV donations
  - Environmental organizations donations
  - Buy organic foods
  - Purchase goods from green companies
- Others may reflect consistent behaviors
  - Recycling
- Or real demographic characteristics
  - Post college education



## **Lets Not Stop Here**

- Self-efficacy appears to be a key
- Wisconsin Focus on Energy campaign has shifted message to a "Can Do" approach.
- We will continue to research and suggest marketers begin to test new messages





## Changing the Marketing Message

- Message should enhance perception of selfefficacy about the purchase of green power.
  - You can do this! If you don't who will?
  - This is an opportunity for you to make a difference!
- Message should enhance sense that purchase will have have the response sought.
  - This will lead to green power being built, operated.
  - This will increase the amount of green power, renewables available.
  - This will result in cleaner environment, less global warming, etc.

